

COMMITMENT ONE:

We will ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

OBJECTIVE 1.1: To prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully and create a stable political environment, through respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, a transparent and effective legal framework, transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public and private national and international institutions, and effective and equal participation of all people, at all levels, in decisions and actions that affect their food security.

To this end, governments, in partnership, as appropriate, with all actors of civil society, will where not already accomplished:

(a) In cooperation, as appropriate, with the international community, assure and reinforce peace, by developing conflict prevention mechanisms, settling disputes by peaceful means, as well as by promoting tolerance, non-violence and respect for diversity;

Domestically:

The United States has a range of conflict prevention mechanisms, to settle disputes by peaceful means, as well as to promote tolerance, non-violence, and respect for diversity to assure and reinforce domestic peace.

Internationally:

U.S. programs address the primary causes of social instability and underdevelopment by joining in partnership with the government and citizens of the country to address mutually identified problems. Development is sustainable, which is the objective of the United States, when it permanently enhances the capacity of a society to improve its quality of life.

The United States sponsors comprehensive electoral support services which have been built over time on lessons learned from earlier electoral assistance activities. These include election planning and implementation, political party development, and civic education. The focus of these efforts is increasingly on the long-term institutionalization of appropriate political procedures through the strengthening of local capacity.

Humanitarian aid agencies that provide relief in conflict situations seek increasingly to ensure, minimally, that aid is provided in a way that does not exacerbate or prolong conflict. In addition, they are seeking to understand processes of conflict transformation at the local and national levels and to carry out programs that promote such efforts.

The U.S. government is involved in many diplomatic efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, at home and abroad. In particular, the Action Plan for the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative

(b) Develop policy making, legislative and implementation processes that are democratic, transparent, participatory, empowering, responsive to changing circumstances and most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all;

U.S. policy making, legislative and implementation processes are democratic, transparent, participatory, empowering, responsive to changing circumstances and conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.

specifically addresses conflict resolution in the region. Many U.S. NGOs are similarly engaged, often independently. U.S. human rights organizations support the monitoring of human rights practices and support efforts by civil society organizations to ensure respect for human rights.

An Arms Trade code of conduct was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives and has been considered by the Senate. A large number of peace and disarmament groups are continuing to work to promote its adoption.

See also 1.1 (e) and 5.1 (a).

The United States seeks to assist young democracies in reforming government structures and processes from an orientation of being responsive for the people to one that is responsible to the people. The United States assists governmental institutions to become more transparent, accountable, and participatory in their functions. Assistance focuses on legislative modernization, decentralization and local government capacity building, public policy development and implementation, civil and military relations, and promotion of anti-corruption and public accountability initiatives.

U.S. civil society organizations are among those calling for consultative status for non-governmental organizations in the U.N. General Assembly and for provisions for Civil Society involvement in deliberations of the World Trade Organization. The demand for democratic reforms frequently originates from civil society. "Civil society" is the term used to describe the wide array of voluntary associations and organizations that constitute a vital channel for sharing information and conveying the interests of ordinary men and women to the institutions of government. Civil society organizations are the primary means of citizen participation in public affairs. A vibrant civil society protects individuals and their communities from arbitrary or unilateral decisions by governments or economic interests. The United States will assist in strengthening the capacity of pro-democratic civil society organizations to advocate basic constitutional and legal reforms for improved governance. The range of groups receiving assistance thus far has included coalitions of professional associations, civic education groups, women's rights organizations,

(c) Promote and strengthen well-functioning legal and judicial systems to protect the rights of all people;

U.S. legal and judicial systems protect the rights of all people.

business and labor federations, bar associations, environmental activist groups, and human rights monitoring organizations.

U.S. NGOs are very active in promoting transparent and accountable government, both at home and abroad..

The United States provides assistance to strengthen legal systems, target improvements in the administration of justice (AOJ), citizen access to justice, and legal reform. The purpose of AOJ activities is to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness, and equity in the justice system. Specific measures to this end include the development of structures and procedures for ensuring accountability in the courts, improving capacities for data gathering and analysis, and the streamlining of case tracking and processing procedures. Access to justice measures protect the legal rights of disenfranchised groups including the poor, women, and ethnic minorities; assist in the development of alternative dispute resolution systems; and build constituencies for legal reform. Legal reform objectives include the incorporation of basic due process guarantees within a legal and constitutional framework, and market-oriented commercial and civil procedures.

(d) Recognize and support indigenous people and their communities in their pursuit of economic and social development, with full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural values.

The United States recognizes and supports its indigenous people and their communities in their pursuit of economic and social development, with full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization, and cultural values.

NGOs (e.g., Cultural Survival Enterprises) working in partnership with the U.S. government and independently, seek to advance the rights and protect the livelihoods of indigenous people.

The mission of the Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian Tribes, and Alaska Natives. This is accomplished through the delivery of quality services, maintaining government-to-government relationships within the spirit of Indian self-determination and tribal sovereignty. The development of the Tribes' natural and human resources, establishment of basic infrastructure on reservations, and the development of effective tribal institutions capable of efficiently administering normal governmental functions are all essential to tribal self-determination. The Department of Health and Human Services Indian Health

Service provides a quality health services delivery system for American Indians and Alaska Natives with opportunity for maximum tribal involvement in developing and managing programs to meet health needs.

See also 1.4.

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The United States fully supports and acts in accordance with the U.N. charter. A wide range of humanitarian and business organizations are supporting legislation currently pending in Congress to authorize the U.S. sale of food and medicines to Cuba. These organizations have called for a process leading to normalization of relations between Cuba and the U.S. and a lifting of the U.S. embargo against Cuba. (Note that this is not currently official U.S. government policy.)

See 1.1 (a). and 5.1 (a).

OBJECTIVE 1.2: To ensure stable economic conditions and implement development strategies which encourage the full potential of private and public, individual and collective initiatives for sustainable, equitable, economic and social development which also integrate population and environmental concerns.

To this end, governments, and as appropriate, in partnership with all actors in civil society, will:

Domestically:

Internationally:

a) *Promote policies in order to foster a national and international environment that is more conducive to sustainable, equitable economic and social development;*

U.S. policies promote a national environment that is conducive to sustainable, equitable, economic and social development of its people.

The United States assists countries to reduce poverty through the promotion of broad based economic growth by strengthening market linkages and the domestic market infrastructure. These efforts seek: (a) improvements in efficiency and competitiveness of national and local economies; (b) expanded access to economic activity for the poor, and © increased integration into a rapidly globalizing economy. In order to achieve these strategic priorities, programs are concentrated in five areas: (1) economic and policy reform; (2) privatization; (3) legal and institutional reform; (4) financial sector development; (5) general business, trade, and investment regime.

The United States also carries out research and provides technical assistance on agricultural policy through a range of activities including

b) Establish legal and other mechanisms, as appropriate, that advance land reform, recognize and protect property, water, and user rights, to enhance access for the poor and women to resources. Such mechanisms should also promote conservation and sustainable use of natural resources (such as land, water and forests), lower risks, and encourage investment;

c) Fully integrate population concerns into development strategies, plans, and decision making, including factors affecting migration, and devise appropriate population policies, programmes, and family planning services, consistent with the Report and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994.

In FY 1997, the United States published a report on the evolving federal role in land use and conservation in the United States. The report places special emphasis on the use of voluntary mechanisms such as rental contracts and conservation easements to balance public and private interests in the use and conservation of environmentally sensitive lands such as erodible lands, wetlands, and farmlands near expanding urban areas.

In its support for the Cairo Plan of Action, the United States has sought to emphasize the linkages between food security and population stabilization, rational population distribution, alleviating poverty, protecting the environment, and introducing appropriate technologies. The United States has advocated sound national development policies that integrate these objectives.

See also 2.4 (a)

the Food Security II Project (FSII) and the Agricultural Policy Analysis Project III (APAP III). The purpose of FSII is to strengthen the capacity of participating countries and USAID to analyze food security issues and formulate policies, institutional reforms, investment plans, and management processes that promote food security. It is a research-oriented cooperative agreement mechanism relating primarily to African countries. The four components of APAP III are: (1) technical assistance for policy analysis; (2) comparative policy analysis and synthesis research; (3) training, guidelines and methodology development; and (4) information dissemination and networking.

See also 1.1 (b), 1.2 (a), 1.4 (b), 2.1 (a), 2.1 (c), 3.1 (a), 3.1 (b), 3.2 (a), 3.2 (c), 3.3 (d), 3.4 (a), 3.4 (g), 3.5 (a), 4.3 (a), and 6.1 (a)

The purpose of the Sustainable Agricultural System (SANREM) Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP) is to stimulate and support innovating systems-based research to identify and develop sustainable agricultural production and natural resource management systems in developing countries to bring about sustainable agriculture in the context of local settings.

See also 2.1 (d), 2.3 (c), 3.1 (a, b, c, d), 3.2 (a, b, c, e, g), 3.4 (i), 3.5 (f, k), 6.2 (b, c)

A growing number of women's and development organizations are focusing on the importance of gender perspectives on national and international macro-economic policies. Likewise, efforts to incorporate environmental impact assessments of policies and programs are increasingly being recognized as an integral element of achieving sustainable, equitable, economic and social development.

Through the Broadening Access and Strengthening Input Market System (BASIS) project, the United States carries out research and provides assistance to countries in designing and implementing measures to improve rural households' access to equitable and efficient land, water, labor, and rural financial markets. The BASIS CRSP is initiating research on policy problems related to gender-biased and environmentally destructive growth.

See comment on support for Cairo Plan of Action in domestic column.

The achievement of stable population growth rates are essential to the success of the United States' attempts to contribute to sustainable development. AID's strategy to stabilize the global population level and protect human health, including child survival, is based on four objectives: (1) sustainable reductions in child mortality, (2) sustainable reductions in maternal mortality, (3) sustainable reductions in unintended pregnancies, (4) sustainable reductions in sexually transmitted diseases and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection.

Population policy is a highly contentious topic among civil society groups in the United States. Many groups lobby and litigate for and against current and proposed policies.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: To ensure gender equality and empowerment of women.

To this end, governments will:

(a) Support and implement commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in all policies;

The United States strongly reaffirms its support for the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and recognizes the special role played by women in achievement of food security.

(b) Promote women's full and equal participation in the economy, and for this purpose introduce and enforce gender-sensitive legislation providing women with secure and equal access to and control over productive resources including credit, land and water;

The United States prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in all of its policies and programs, as well as in private employment and financial matters and seeks to eliminate gender preference in all areas of society and economy.

(c) Ensure that institutions provide equal access for women;

In 1995, the President formed the Interagency Council on Women to ensure the implementation of the Platform of Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Council is also charged with developing related initiatives to further women's progress and to engage in outreach and public education to support the successful implementation of the Conference agreements. The Council has seven working groups focusing on specific issues. These include Women and the Global Economy, which works to ensure that Administration policy deliberations on global economic issues give appropriate consideration to the effects of policies on and programs on women, and Rural Women, which seeks to

(d) Provide equal gender opportunities for education and training in food production, processing and marketing;

(e) Tailor extension and technical services to women producers and increase the number of women advisors and agents;

Over 20 years ago, the United States recognized the critical role of women in development by establishing a Women in Development (WAD) program. The WAD program is inherently cross-cutting in its support of all the U.S. development goals and, therefore, must be integrated if developing countries hope to achieve sustainable development. Over the past year, the United States has provided, through WAD, technical support to assist 20 field missions on project design, implementation, and evaluation of gender issues; launched 10 NGO-strengthening activities enabling them to work in women's legal rights, economic empowerment, education and training, reproductive rights, and the management of the environment and natural resources; commenced three operational research projects to enhance women's involvement and influence in political, civic, and community life and 14 applied research activities; published four newsletters that were disseminated to over 2,000 individuals and companies on the latest findings regarding women's roles; conducted 12 seminars; and placed 6 WAD fellows in field missions and Washington regional bureaus.

See the discussion of the President's Interagency Council on Women in the domestic column.

Many U.S. humanitarian organizations are working to develop and

(f) Improve the collection, dissemination and use of gender-disaggregated data in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development;

(g) Focus research efforts on the division of labour and on income access and control within the household;

(h) Gather information on women's traditional knowledge and skills in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resources management.

improve the conditions of rural women.

implement gender equity policies and practices. The InterAction Commission on the Advancement of Women will work this year to help member organizations focus on the role of women and gender in agricultural production and food security.

OBJECTIVE 1.4: To encourage national solidarity and provide equal opportunities for all, at all levels, in social, economic and political life, particularly in respect of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and persons.

To this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

(a) Support investment in human resource development such as health, education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential to sustainable development, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development;

(b) Enact or strengthen policies to combat discrimination against members of socially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and persons belonging to minorities, with particular attention to their rights to land and other property, and to their access to credit, education and training, commercial markets and food security programmes;

Domestically:

Healthy People 2000, the national prevention initiative to improve the health of all Americans, is the product of unprecedented cooperation among government, voluntary and professional organizations, business and individuals. The cornerstone of this effort is a set of national health promotion and disease prevention objectives for the year 2000. Healthy People 2000 sets three broad public health goals for the 1990s:

- *Increase the span of healthy life for Americans.
- *Reduce health disparities among Americans
- *Achieve access to preventive services for all Americans.

The second goal of Healthy People 2000 specifies the elimination of health status disparities that have been linked to racial and ethnic identity, as well as to economic status and gender of various population groups. Specific population targets were set for adolescents, American Indian/Alaskan Natives, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, older Americans, people with disabilities, people with low

Internationally:

U.S. programs give priority to the reform and expansion of primary education for children, with particular attention to girls, and to market-driven work force education and training for adolescents and adults. U.S. assistance brings the strengths of the U.S. higher education community to bear strategically on strengthening the human resource base in developing countries through institutional linkages as well as through individual participant training. The United States will continue to support administrative and policy reforms in education; to implement strategies to reach girls, rural, and poor children; and to facilitate public education and social marketing in support of improved health, civil society, and environmental protection.

Dozens of U.S. development organizations carry out or fund literacy, basic education, vocational, scholarship, and training programs. U.S. NGOs, e.g., Academy for Educational Development, are active partners in promoting international basic education.

A major campaign has just been launched by women's and other civil society organizations in the U.S. to convince the U.S. Senate

incomes, and women. As a part of the 1995 revisions, 120 special population targets were added to focus more attention on the needs of population groups that have the highest risk for premature death, disease, or disability. In each case new targets were added only if the group has demonstrated higher risk or is more vulnerable to the subject disease or condition than the population as a whole, or if the group has a different trend.

The United States has developed a national goal to increase breastfeeding rates in the United States, which it published in Healthy People 2000: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for the Nation. The objectives are for 75 percent of women to breastfeed their newborns and for 50 percent to still be breastfeeding at 5-6 months. To achieve these rates of breastfeeding initiation and breastfeeding duration will require major changes in attitude and practices of society, women, employers, and the health care system. During the last decade the government has sponsored a series of broad educational activities, demonstrations, and research efforts to foster breastfeeding promotion and support. The six major areas for the breastfeeding initiative are:

- 1) Improve the professional education in human lactation and breastfeeding.
- 2) Develop public education and promotion efforts.
- 3) Strengthen the support for breastfeeding in the health care system.
- 4) Develop a broad range of support services in the community.
- 5) Initiate a national breastfeeding promotion effort directed to women in the world of work.
- 6) Expand research on human lactation and data collection on breastfeeding.

WIC, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, has a breastfeeding consortium to encourage mothers to breastfeed and educate them in the benefits of breastfeeding.

to ratify the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

See 1.2 (b), 1.3 (b), 2.1 (d), 2.1 (e), and 3.5 (e).

The United States is doing a great deal in support of breastfeeding and maternal and complementary feeding for young children. Country assessments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have provided the basis for activities to include breastfeeding in child health, maternal survival and other health programming.

NGOs, universities, and the private sector partner with the U.S. government to support maternal and child health efforts.

(c) Enact legislation and establish institutional structures that provide opportunities for youth and enhance the special contribution that women can make to ensuring family and child nutrition with due emphasis on the importance of breast-feeding for infants;

(d) Give special attention to promoting and

protecting the interests and needs of the child, particularly the girl child, in food security programmes, consistent with the World Summit for Children - Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York 1990.

As part of the President's charge to forge Coalitions for America's Future, the United States is challenging America's communities to become active partners in helping 9 to 14-year-old girls successfully navigate adolescence and reach their full potential through Girl Neighborhood Power!: Building Bright Futures for Success (GNP). The initiative strives to encourage girls to stay away from tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs and to embrace abstinence, physical activity, good nutrition, mental health, education, and healthy development as pathways toward strong futures. Participants draw upon family, community, and volunteerism to build confidence, provide opportunities, and strengthen resilience so that girls make responsible choices and make the most of their lives.

The National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program provide school children with meals free or at reduced cost. The Special Milk Program and the Homeless Child Nutrition Program supplement nutritionally needy children. The Child and Adult Care Food Program supports meals for children in child care and elder impaired adults in day care. The Summer Food Service Program supports meals to needy children during school vacations.

Executive Order 13045 of April 21, 1997 formalized the Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (the Forum) to deliver to the President an annual report on the condition of children.

Many NGOs, e.g., Academy for Educational Development, Save the Children, are involved in promoting rights of girl children internationally.

See 1.1 (c), 5.1 (b), 7.4 (a), 7.4 (c), 7.4 (d), and 7.4 (e).